(b) NTPC has been directed to purchase gas from the spot market. Ministry of Power has requested Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas to initiate following actions to improve the gas availability in the gas based power stations:

— Augmentation of production of natural gas from the existing gas fields/wells.

— Increasing availability of gas from domestic sources by awarding has blocks for Exploration & Production (E&P) activities under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP).

— Encouraging import of gas in the form of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and also making efforts for import of gas through international pipeline projects.

**Definition of electrified villages**

†847. SHRI. SURENDRA LATH:
SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether present definition of an electrified village has been turned to be unsatisfactory as it does not cater to the requirements of the villagers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this definition is required to be revised so that a village should be declared electrified only when a certain number of houses therein get electricity;

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(e) the measures taken/proposed to be taken to revise the definition regarding electrification of a village?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P. M. SAYEED): (a) to (e) The present definition of village electrification has come in to effect from 1st April, 2004 after due deliberations on the earlier definition which was there since October, 1997. The new definition is more encompassing as also target specific unlike the earlier one which was unsatisfactory.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

As per earlier definition, "a village will be deemed to be electrified if the electricity is used in the inhabited locality, within the revenue boundary of the village for any purpose whatsoever."

As per the new definition, a village would be declared as electrified if:

(i) Basic infrastructure such as Distribution Transformer and Distribution lines are provided in the habited locality as well as the Dalit Basti/hamlet where it exists. (For electrification through Non-Conventional Energy Sources a Distribution Transformer may not be necessary);

(ii) Electricity is provided to public places like Schools, Panchayat Office, Health Centres, Dispensaries, Community centres etc.;

(iii) The number of households electrified should be at least 10% of the total number of households in the village; and

(iv) The Panchayat should certify that the village is electrified."

**Athirappilly Hydro-Electric Project in Kerala**

848. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether necessary clearance has been given to the Athirappilly Hydel Project in Kerala;

(b) if so, the present status of the project;

(c) whether detailed study has been undertaken to ascertain the environmental/ecological impact of this project;

(d) if so, details thereof; and

(e) the time by when the project is expected to be operational ?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P. M. SAYEED) : (a) The necessary clearances namely, environmental & forest clearances from Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) and techno-economic clearance from Central Electricity Authority for implementation of Athirappilly Hydro Electric Project (163 MW = 2 x 80 MW + 2x1.5 MW) in Kerala have been accorded.

(b) Kerala State electricity Board who are implementing the project have informed that the 'letter of award' for the works has been awarded to